The decorations in this instance, it was added, are upon red, blue, and black-coloured grounds alternating, while another distinct class is elsewhere produced by painting on the lime itself, and this leaving a light or white ground, as at the Ducal Palace at Florence. Each style, it was contended, possesses advantages, the white ground being recommended for entrance halls and corridors, and the richer full-toned grounds, as harmonising better with the force, tone, and character of fully furnished apartments.

Ecclesiastical examples of fresco painting were also referred to. Those in the Church of the Annunciation at Genoa were mentioned as the richest examples he had met with: other frescoes in the villa Farnesina, and those in the Palazzo Farnese by A. Caracci, were also commented upon. The paper concluded by setting forth that in Italy we now find many copyists and mannerists, but no great painters; the artists of the present day appearing to restrict their efforts to copying the best works of the old masters.

## New Books.

*The History of Ireland from the earliest Period of the Irish Annals to the Rebellion of 1848.* By Thomas Wright, M.A., F.S.A., &c. London: J. and F. Tallis. Parts I., II., and III.

Mr. Wright is so well known by his antiquarian attainments and his published works illustrative of British History, that his name on the title page of this book is sufficient assurance that it will be a careful and able work. With a large amount of learning, Mr. Wright has great industry, and may be relied on for the most pains-taking research and careful collation. Coming at the present moment, when the agitated state of Ireland and the circumstances affecting her prosperity are objects of interest to the whole empire, this history can scarcely fail to command attention, and to ensure that large sale which can alone remunerate its proprietors.

In the first part, the antiquities of Ireland are glanced at, and will, we trust, receive further development from the author as the work proceeds. He is speaking of the earliest period of Irish history, and says—

"The monuments of the earlier inhabitants that remain, confirm in general the statements of the Roman historians, that they resembled the Britons in habits and manners. Their mode of burial seems to have been precisely the same, and this, combined with other circumstances, leads us to suppose that the religious rites of the people of the two islands bore a very close resemblance. In Ireland as in Britain, the graves—the only constructions of the aboriginal inhabitants which have remained entire—consisted of a rough chamber or chambers of unhewn stones, covered with a lofty mound of earth or stones, the base of which was often surrounded with a circle of larger stones. In the central chamber or cist, the body was laid in full dress, accompanied with personal ornaments, weapons, or other articles, or if cremation had preceded the burial, the bones were placed in an urn, and similar articles were strewed on the floor. These monuments are of frequent occurrence in Ireland as well as in England, and they are often of enormous magnitude, as in the case of that of Newgrange, near Drogheda, in the county of Meath, and of two others in its immediate neighbourhood. It is far from improbable that Stonehenge, in England, was designed for an enormous sepulchral monument. In the numerous instances where the mound has, in the course of ages, been cleared away, and nothing but the central chamber and the external circle of stones is left standing, the former has received the name of a cromlech, and the latter that of a Druidical circle; and antiquaries who trusted more to their imagination than to a careful comparison of facts, thought they had been temples and altars.

In one respect, the contents of the sepulchres of the ancient Irish seem to contradict the Roman authorities, inasmuch as they apparently testify a higher degree of cultivation than in Britain. In most cases, the Irish urns are better made and much more richly ornamented than the British urns. The personal ornaments are more numerous and of greater intrinsic value, and articles of gold are far more abundant. Their forms and ornamentation are, however, similar in character; and we have other proofs that gold was found in Ireland in great abundance at a remote period."

The work is to be illustrated by Mr. Henry Warren, the president of the New Water Colour Society. Some of the prints already given are scarcely up to the mark, but this we must attribute to the engraver rather than to the artist, whose skill and power are admitted by all.

*Incitements to Studies of Steam and the Steam-Engine.* By W. Templeton, R.N., Woolwich. Silverlock, Wardrobe-terrace, Doctors'-commons.

This is a pocket *brochure* of thirty-eight pages, containing, in the shape of question and answer, facts pertaining to steam and the steam-engine, a knowledge of which the British Government demand as necessary qualifications for engineers in the naval service. We suppose there are few holding such responsible situations who do not know all that this little book teaches: still it may be found a useful prompter.

We give one question and its answer as a sample:—

"*What is the difference of the temperatures relative to the production of steam at equal densities, from those of fresh and sea waters individually?*

Sea water naturally holds in solution $\frac{1}{32}$rd. its weight of salt, which becomes gradually augmented by evaporation; each grade as approaching to saturation requiring a higher degree of temperature in attaining the boiling point;—thus, at $\frac{1}{16}$rds of saturation, the boiling point is 214·4° Fah.; at $\frac{1}{8}$rds. it is 215·5°; and at $\frac{1}{4}$rds., beyond which grade of saturation the water in a steam or marine boiler ought never to be allowed to exceed, the boiling point is elevated to 216·7°; hence, to find the degree of temperature at which steam of a given density would be obtained from salt water equal to that from fresh water, the excess of temperature due to the saltness of the water must be added; thus,

Suppose the temperature to produce steam at 12 lbs. per square inch, from fresh water, be 245·1° Fah., the temperature to produce the same from water holding $\frac{1}{4}$rds. its weight of salt will be 245·1 + 4·7 = 249·8° Fah., 4·7 being the difference between 212° and 216·7."

*The Practical Contractors' and Builders' Pocket Guide.* 2nd Edit. Trelawny and Saunders, Charing-cross. 1848.

This is a useful collection of tables and calculations in a compendious form, which many will find a valuable pocket companion. No. 22 shews what quantity of brickwork is contained in any culvert, from 9 inches in diameter and 4½ inches thick, to 6 feet in diameter and 18 inches thick, and the number of bricks required for one lineal yard: No. 48 shews the quantity of cube feet in one square of roofing, flooring, common framing, or quarter partition, according to various scantling: No. 49 shews the value of masonry and brickwork in cube yards, and reduced, from 1s. 4d. per foot to 5s. per foot cube. And these will serve to give a notion of the character of the tables.

The Works at the New Houses of Parliament.—In reply to several inquirers we are obliged to say,—it is too true that a large number of men have been discharged from these works. Where there were about 1,000 employed, there will now be not more than 500; and after Christmas a further reduction is threatened. What makes this short-sighted policy worse is,—that many of those who have been discharged are picked men, trained to the sort of work in hand, and not easily to be replaced hereafter.

Plan of Mooltan.—With that promptitude which characterises Mr. Wyld's publications, he has already issued a sketch of the fortifications of Mooltan, which will serve effectually to make known the site of the late disastrous outbreak in India.

## Miscellanea.

The Marble Arch at Buckingham Palace.—Sir: Various sites have been suggested for the marble arch at Buckingham Palace, on its removal from its present position,—amongst others, that it should be placed at the end of the gravel walk in Kensington Gardens. Now it appears to me, that a more suitable site might be found for it than those already proposed. My plan is this, to place it at the present southern extremity of the broad walk in the Regent's-park (the termination of the park on that side), and to lengthen out the broad walk to Portland-place. The arch in this position would form at once an imposing object from Portland-place, and a noble entrance to the park. If it be contended that the extension of the broad walk as proposed by me, would destroy too much of the gardens in Park-square and Park-crescent, at least the trees and shrubs might be removed, and a grass plat, of the same width as the broad walk, be laid down in a continuous line with the walk to Portland-place; thus the vista along the latter to the arch would be uninterrupted, and the area of the gardens undiminished. Another good situation for the arch might be made by continuing the mall in St. James's-park, in a straight line to Charing-cross, and placing the arch at that end of the mall. On this site the arch would still be preserved as the entrance to Buckingham-palace, and the now circuitous and objectionable route to the palace under the building of the Horse Guards avoided. As this plan, however, would involve a heavy expenditure in the demolition of houses, and the purchase of their sites, perhaps the situation first suggested by me would be the preferable of the two. Alpha.

Art and Religion.—In the course of a lecture on the Relation of Literature and Art to Religion, delivered by Mr. G. Dawson last week, at the Whittington Club (Strand), the lecturer said he would not give much for any painting that did not express much more than was exhibited on the canvass, nor for the artist who did not aim at the accomplishment of so valuable an achievement. He wished that our artists would, like the immortal Michelangelo, aim to achieve what was comely and beautiful, rather than what was simply useful. Nature, which in a wise man was a method, was to him everything. He was not a "bread" artist—he did not paint, as some of our artists (from necessity) paint, for the market: he was an artist of the soul, and painted from and true to nature. The lecturer then proceeded to shew that art, as exhibited in painting and music, had been torn, in a manner, from religion, between which and it there was a divine association, and said they wished to know now whether it was possible so to re-unite them as to make them auxiliary to each other. To effect this, what were they to do? In these Protestant days they were rather out of tune with art. True, they had several new churches in course of building; but their great error was trying to invoke the antique spirit of church architecture. He wished they would throw more soul into them. They were unable to go on, or to appreciate art without a "guide," and if modern art did not go a little more forward, it would sink into a state of rheumatic frigidity. They should go forward then with spirit, and not attempt to warm up old art. He needs not dress in Cato's toga in order to have Cato's soul. Let them, he should say, be bold men of to-day, and if they agreed to have a saint, let it be a saint of to-day.

The Western Literary Institution is pursuing usefully a course commenced in a former session,—that of bringing before its members illustrations of new manufacturing processes, &c., in addition to stock lecture subjects. The magnetic telegraph; locomotives; processes for preserving timber, and Drayton's process for silvering glass, have been amongst them. A notice of the Aneroid barometer is to be given on the 20th.

Projected Works.—Advertisements have been issued for tenders—by 15th instant for works required in fitting-up gallery of lecture theatre for Birkbeck School, London Mechanics' Institution; by 15th, for the erection of a work-shed at the workhouse, Hampstead; by 1st proximo, for locomotive stores for the Midland Railway Company.

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